



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 15.14

Subject:	Adoption Assistance Case File Contents
Authority:	TCA 36-1-102(4); 36-1-201—206; 37-5-106
Standards:	DCS Practice Model Standards – 2-102A, DCS Practice Model Standards – 2-104, DCS Practice Model Standards – 2-600. COA Standards:
Application:	To All Department of Children's Services Adoption Services Staff and Tennessee Licensed Child Placing Agency Staff.

Policy Statement:

Adoption assistance case files must include complete information about a child's eligibility for adoption assistance, applications, agreements, revisions, supporting documentation and case closures.

Purpose:

To ensure that adoption assistance case files are uniform and contain pertinent and supporting documentation related to all adoption assistance cases.

Procedures:

A. Case File Organization	Adoption assistance case file style and maintenance must be uniform for all active adoption case files (see Protocol For Adoption Assistance Case File Contents).
B. Initial application	<p>The following adoption forms and supporting documentation for initial adoption assistance requests must be permanently maintained in the adoption assistance case file:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Adoption Assistance Program, Application for Adoption Assistance (former CS-0460), and /or other retired forms (if applicable at time of initial contract development) utilized prior to October 1, 1997 : form 4290, Adoption Assistance Agreement, form 4280, Application for Adoption Assistance, and form 970, Adoptive Placement Agreement Between the Tennessee Department of Children's Services and Prospective Adoptive Parents.2. <i>CS-0460, Intent to Adopt Placement Agreement (Part1) and Application for Adoption Assistance (Part2).</i>

	<p>3. CS-0461, Adoption Assistance Agreements Applied for Prior to October 1, 1997.</p> <p>4. CS-0513, Adoption Assistance Agreement.</p>
C. Initial supporting documentation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cost of non-recurring adoption expenses is required when these expenses are included in the agreement. 2. Documentation of conditions or high risk factors upon which a child is approved for adoption assistance. If the child is under current treatment, documentation of current diagnosis and prognosis must be obtained from the treating physician, psychologist or licensed clinical social worker. 3. When there is no current treatment or diagnosis, but the child has high risk factors that indicate there may be a future need for treatment (e.g., an abused child who needs future counseling) initial documentation must reflect the identified risk factors and how these risk factors were identified.
D. Extraordinary adoption assistance rate approvals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For a child who was in a DCS foster home prior to the adoptive placement, the adoption assistance case file must contain the following: <p>Note: For those adoptions completed prior to October 2006, form CS-0562, Request for Negotiated Board Rate (no longer available) rather than CS-0674, Special or Extraordinary Rate Request, should be maintained in the adoption assistance case file.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Form CS-0674, Special or Extraordinary Rate Request completed in foster care within 3 months prior to the approval of the adoption assistance rate. b) Part I of form CS-0674, Special or Extraordinary Rate Request reflecting the adoption assistance rate approval. c) Written documentation to support the determination of the special or extraordinary rate. 2. For a child who was in a Tennessee Licensed Child Placing Agency (TLCPA) resource home prior to the adoptive placement, the adoption assistance case file must contain the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Form CS-0674, Special or Extraordinary Rate Request reflecting the adoption assistance rate approval by the Regional Administrator or designee. b) Written documentation to support the determination of the extraordinary rate.
E. Revisions in adoption assistance	<p>Any revisions in adoption assistance must be reflected on appropriate forms CS-0461, Adoption Assistance Agreements Applied for Prior to October 1, 1997 and CS-0513, Adoption Assistance Agreement, and must be included in the adoption assistance case file. Supporting documentation must be submitted with</p>

	each revision, and included in the adoption assistance file.
F. Supporting documentation for revisions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When benefits from SSI, SSA, or VA are being received, a copy of the award letter must be on file in the adoption assistance case file. 2. When a child enters state custody, written documentation regarding the adoptive parents' continuing support must be included in the case file. The amount and type of support (has to include some financial support) must be clearly documented in the case file (see Protocol for Adoption Assistance When Children Re-enter Care). 3. When a child receiving Title IV-E Adoption Assistance turns 18 years old, documentation regarding the child's continuing handicapping condition must be included in the case file for the case to remain open. Documentation verifying the handicapping condition must be obtained each year at renewal until the child turns 21 years old and the case is closed. The form CS-0792, Review of Eligibility for Adoption Assistance for Child Turning 18, 19, and 20 Years Old must be included in the file to verify the Team Coordinator's review for continuing eligibility. 4. When a child receiving state-funded adoption assistance turns 18 years old, documentation verifying that the child attends high school full-time, for agreements initiated after October 1, 1997, must be included in the case file. For agreements initiated prior to October 1, 1997, documentation of full time attendance at any accredited school must be included in the case file. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Documentation verifying school attendance must be included in the case file at each renewal until the child turns 21 years old and the case is closed (see Criteria for Documenting Full-Time School Attendance for Youth 18,19, and 20 years of Age and form CS-0809, Verification of Full-Time School Attendance). The form CS- 0792, Review of Eligibility for Adoption Assistance for Child Turning 18, 19, and 20 Years Old must be included in the file to verify the Team Coordinator's review of continuing eligibility. b) For those children who receive state funded adoption assistance (who are 18 and over) and have adoption assistance agreements initiated prior to October 1, 1997, documentation of full time attendance <u>at any school</u> must be reviewed quarterly by Central Office adoption staff(see Policy 15.11, Adoption Assistance). c) For those children who receive state funded adoption assistance (who are 18 and over) and have adoption assistance agreements initiated after October 1, 1997, documentation of full-time high school attendance will be reviewed quarterly by Central Office adoption staff (see Policy 15.11, Adoption Assistance). 5. When a child is no longer eligible for IV-E adoption assistance and is changed to state-funded adoption assistance, documentation of full-time school attendance must be included in the case file. For those children whose contracts were entered into prior to October 1, 1997, documentation of full-time school attendance at any accredited school is required. For those children whose contracts were entered into after October 1, 1997,

	documentation of full-time high school attendance is also required.
G. Adoption Assistance renewals	<p>Adoption assistance must be renewed annually and may be completed at any time during the year when documenting a revision. The items listed below must be maintained in the case file for each renewal, as appropriate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A renewal memorandum. 2. A notarized copy of forms CS-0459, Adoption Assistance Renewal Affidavit. 3. CS- 0792, Review of Eligibility for Adoption Assistance for Child turning 18, 19, and 20 Years Old when applicable. 4. Follow-up letter to parents who do not return signed renewal agreements in a timely manner.
H. Supporting documentation for renewals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Documentation supporting any revisions made at the same time as the renewal must be included in the case file. (see Section E, "Revisions in Adoption Assistance"). 2. Documentation does not have to be obtained at the renewal each year until the child actually begins receiving that service. Document on form CS-0460, Intent to Adopt Placement Agreement (Part1) and Application for Adoption Assistance (Part2), the child's condition and the date of initial documentation.
I. Termination of an adoption case	<p>When an adoption assistance case is being terminated, the following documentation must be maintained in the adoption assistance case file:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notification to parents of adoption assistance termination and appeal rights, form CS-0686, Notice of Denial, Termination, or Change in Adoption Assistance. 2. Form CS-0513, Adoption Assistance Agreement indicating the date of termination of adoption assistance.
J. Required signatures	All forms must reflect appropriate signatures as required by the form instructions.
K. On-going quality assurance of adoption assistance case files	Adoption assistance case files will be reviewed at least quarterly for quality assurance.

Forms:	<u>CS- 0459, Adoption Assistance Renewal Affidavit</u> <u>CS- 0513, Adoption Assistance Agreement</u> <u>CS-0403 Appeal For Fair Hearing</u> <u>CS- 0460, Intent to Adopt Placement Agreement(Part 1) and Application for Adoption Assistance (Part 2)</u> <u>CS- 0461, Adoption Assistance Agreements Applied for Prior to October 1, 1997</u> <u>CS-0674, Special or Extraordinary Rate Request</u> <u>CS-0686, Notice of Denial, Termination or Change in Adoption Assistance</u> <u>CS- 0790, Review of Adoption Assistance Rate for Child Turning Three Years Old</u> <u>CS- 0792, Review of Eligibility for Adoption Assistance for Child Turning 18, 19, and 20 Years Old.</u>
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Collateral Documents:	<u>Protocol for Adoption Assistance Case File Contents</u> <u>Criteria For Documenting Full-Time School Attendance for Youth 18, 19, and 20 Years of Age</u> <u>Protocol For Adoption Assistance When Children Re-Enter Care</u> <u>Policy 15.11, Adoption Assistance</u>
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Glossary:	
Handicapping Condition:	Known and diagnosed medical, mental, or emotional conditions that will require periodic treatment or therapy of a medical or remedial nature.
Supplemental Security Income (SSI):	A Federal income supplement program funded by general tax revenues (not Social Security taxes). It is designed to help aged, blind, and disabled people, who have little or no income. It provides a monthly cash assistance payment to help meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter.

Social Security Administration (SSA):	A Federal Initiative that provides monthly cash assistance payment to individuals to eligible children on behalf of a deceased parent that was eligible for Social Security Disability Income or is the parent becomes deceased. The parent must have worked long enough and have paid Social Security taxes.
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<i>Veteran's Affairs (VA):</i>	A Federal Initiative that provides monthly cash assistance payment to eligible dependents of veterans who died in active duty, who died of service related injuries, or who were eligible for veteran's disability payments.
<i>Title IV-E:</i>	A section of the Social Security Act that provides funding for the maintenance of children in foster care who meet certain Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) eligibility criteria and who meet certain legal requirements, e.g., best interests, reasonable efforts.